

Issues In Implementing Policy Recommendations And Job Placement Of B. Ed (Hons) Program: A Dilemma For Public Sector

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Abstract

The purpose of the current paper is to analyze the B. Ed honors program structure and the aspects of students learning including the issues in implementing policy recommendations and job placement. The population comprised of all the trainee teachers registered in B. Ed. honors in sixth, seventh and eighth semesters at GC University Faisalabad. One hundred and ninety-four prospective teachers participated in the survey voluntarily. Self-constructed instrument, Students' Performance and Satisfaction Survey [SPSS] with Cronbach Alpha reliability (.934) was used. Data were analyzed using descriptive stat, ANOVA, and t-test. The findings revealed that prospective teachers were satisfied with the indicators of performance and satisfaction. A significant difference was found in gender performance. Female prospective teachers performed better in all the indicators of performance and satisfaction except for academic satisfaction that was better in males. Reflective competence is better in rural participants while urban participants perceived learning environment as better indicator. Urban participants show more violent behaviour and rural participants showed more satisfaction towards their studies. On the indicators of academic competence, cooperation, content clarity and achievement score, both groups have not shown any significant difference. Prospective teachers had a significant impact of teaching methods on their performance and satisfaction. They perceived lecture method as the best instructional tool. Teaching subjects had a significant impact on their performance and satisfaction. Female prospective teachers performed better in English subject when compared with males. The policy makers should accept the reality and take justified recruitment measures to entertain the prospective teachers as their academic right to join the teaching profession.

Keywords: *Prospective teachers, performance and satisfaction, academic and reflective competence*

Introduction

Teachers' professional development is an important investment in improving content knowledge and instructional skills. Teacher education institutions are striving their best in their professional programs. These strategies are used in long term as well as in short term programs where they get opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills. Teachers' professional capacity¹ demanded them to increase the students' scholastic outcomes (Munshi, Parveen, Bhatti, Mirza, & Chachar, 2015).

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The latest National Education Policy 2009 recommended changing PTC/CT programs as they do not fulfill the criteria of professional standards for teachers to meet the challenges of the 21st century. So, it is recommended to phase out the current teacher programs of PTC and CT. It is replaced with (ADE) and (B. Ed. Hons) four years. undergraduate course of teacher education in RITEs, GCETs, and universities of teacher education departments (GOP, 2009). As a result of Teacher Education Reforms, new programs like (ADE) and B.Ed. (Honors) are of great importance. These programs are implemented with the provision of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and USAID's Pre-STEP scheme. The universities are trying to ensure the operative implementation of these programs. The goal is to prepare teachers with skills and knowledge to promote the quality education at the national level.

The prospective teachers enrolled in these programs are trained to apply learner-centered methodologies in classes. The teachers' professional development in the past has inconsistencies between what teachers' report (adopted practices) and what they exhibit (endorsed practices) during teaching. These discrepancies are examined during classroom implementation of practices as learner centered teaching (Polly & Hannafin, 2011). The teachers are demanded to change practices, but they are unable to do due to lack of knowledge (Jorgensen, Grootenboer, Niesche, & Lerman, 2010).

Research Objectives

The research problem was considered using these objectives.

1. To search out the existing practices among prospective teachers at university level.
2. To find andragogical challenges confronted by B.Ed. (Hons.) prospective teachers in adjusting to student-centered teaching.
3. To identify the current performance status of prospective teachers at university level.
4. To find out students' performance and satisfaction indicators with respect to teaching methods and teaching subjects.
5. To propose strategies for policy makers.

Review of Related Literature

The teaching profession is continuously criticized due to lack of teaching skills among prospective and in-service teachers. Hence the need of teacher training is strongly criticized. Keeping in view the deterioration of education system the government took it seriously to take initiatives to student-centered teaching instead of teacher centered. Associate Degree in Education (ADE) two years and B.Ed. (Hons) four year were launched to train competent teachers to improve teaching skills. In collaboration with Higher Education Commission (HEC), teachers' training, support material, and curriculum revision was started (<http://www.pakteachers.org>). Curriculum for B Ed (Hons) and ADE approved by HEC (2010) stresses proficiency of prospective teachers as well as in instruction to confirm attainment of predictable learning outcomes of students.

The student-centered learning was adopted under the idea of Froebel that teachers should act as guides (Simon 1999). It is a malleable education (Taylor, 2000), based on experience (Burnard 1999). According to Weimer (2002) learner center teaching has five features: balance in teaching and learning, build knowledge-based content, teacher works as facilitator, prioritize learners rather than teachers; and use of effective assessment. Teacher educators face difficulties in applying activity based and student-centered learning (Ayub & Khan, 2013).

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Student-centered approach is a modern learner expansion theory that focuses on fostering scholars' personal abilities to improve higher level thinking (Higbee, Arendale, & Lundell, 2005). It is the study of student-centered approach supporting pupils' material (Schlossberg et al., 1990). The students know the requirement of applying pedagogical skills and engage in student center activities to some extent, but less academic and physical assets is an issue for educational institutions. They find it challenge to use ICTs successfully. They are unable to choose relevant teaching methods for specific content (Ayub & Khan, 2013). Teacher educators revealed that lesson planning, sharing lesson objectives with students; orientation of lesson; student-centered approaches are important for teaching (Akbar, Akhtar, Hussain, & Abiodullah, 2013). Teachers' pedagogical belief about teaching in classrooms validated in selecting the content, planning the lesson, methods of teaching, classroom management, and students' evaluation (Borg, 2001; Cantu, 2001; Handal & Herington, 2003). Based on research a variety of beliefs teachers possess about learning and teaching that affect classroom performance (Gabrys-Barker, 2010).

Violent Behaviour among Students

The violent behavior of students comprised scholastic piracy (Adeniyi & Taiwo, 2011), misconduct during exams (Bello, 2012), forgery of assignments (Ibok, 2012), rebellious, impolite dress (Omede, 2011), coming late, harassment and cheating (Osogbo, 2012). Whitley, Nelson and Jones (1999) found academic deceit that males showed more cheating behavior than females. Same findings were revealed from the study of Newstead, Franklyn-Stoke and Armstead (1996). On the other hand, Jordan (2001) observed female scholars were expressively involved in cheating behaviors as compared with male scholars. These findings were also confirmed by many studies (Gesinde, Adejumo, & Odusanya, 2011; Walton, 2011), that investigated females were more aggressive in academic dishonesty than male students.

Reflective Competence

Most of the prospective teachers considered practicum as helpful tool for teaching reflection (Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005). Reflective competence in teaching practice (practicum) is a dynamic part of teaching reflections (Smith, 2010; Goh, et al., 2009; Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005), beginner educators (Hascher, Cocard, & Moser, 2004), and prospective teachers (Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005). Teaching practice covers the gap between practicum and theory (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003) if it is made congruent with methodology (Goh et. al., 2009; Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005). It provided the real academic competence among prospective teachers (Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005).

Academic Reflection

Practicum is the quality determinant for teacher education programs (Nancy, 2007). It assists in lesson planning, students' performance, and teachers' retaining (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE], 2010). It is the guarantee of satisfaction in teaching profession (Kiggundu & Nyimuli, 2009). The practicum increases prospective teachers' professional assurance (Caires & Almeida, 2005), promotes self-esteem (Hascher et al., 2004), and improves students learning (Oh, Ankers, Llamas, & Tomyoy, 2005). The prospective teachers have not yet achieved the quality results of practicum (Kiggundu, 2007; Hill, Ball, & Schilling, 2008). The research did not integrate and align the practicum in educational programs (Samaras & Gismondi, 1998).

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses were designed to achieve the required objectives.

Ho1: There is not an apparent distinction in male and female students' performance and satisfaction indicators.

Ho2: There is not an apparent distinction in rural and urban students' performance and satisfaction indicators.

Ho3: There is not an apparent distinction in students' performance and satisfaction indicators with respect to teaching methods.

Ho4: There is not an apparent distinction in students' performance and satisfaction indicators with respect to teaching subjects.

Methodology

Survey type research was used. All the prospective teachers enrolled in B. Ed. Hons. in different sessions and semesters were the population of the study. One hundred and ninety-four prospective teachers selected from semester 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th. Data were collected with the help of self-constructed instrument, Students' Performance and Satisfaction Survey [SPSS]. The questionnaire consisted of indicators like academic competence, reflective competence, cooperation, learning environment, violent behavior, content clarity, and students' satisfaction. The prospective teachers selected the prevalent teaching methods used by the teachers in classrooms as lecture method, activity method, question answer method, and discussion method. The result of the four subjects was selected as performance of prospective teachers (teaching of English and Urdu language, Educational Psychology, and Comparative education). The Cronbach Alpha Reliability of the instrument was computed as .934. Descriptive as well as Inferential statistics were used for testing the research hypotheses.

Data Analysis

Table 1 Mean Values and Standard Deviation of Students' Performance and Satisfaction Indicators

	Academic Competence	Reflective Competence	Cooperation	Learning Env.	Violent Behavior	Content Clarity	Student Satisfaction
Mean	4.03	3.97	4.00	3.96	3.46	4.01	3.08
Std. D.	1.04	.67	.70	.67	.57	.62	.33

Table 1 showed the mean value and standard deviation of the indicators under study. The students have perceived better academic competence at B. Ed honors level. They have claimed about the clarity of content. The next highest indicator was cooperation among students at university level regarding the academic activities in the classroom. The fourth indicator is the reflective competence about the courses they have studied in the program. They also perceived the positive learning environment. However, they have confessed to practicing violent behavior at university level. They also had shown low satisfaction about their career in future and job placement. They are pessimistic about their future.

Ho1: There is not an apparent distinction in male and female students' performance and satisfaction indicators.

Table 2 Comparison between Males and Females about "Students' Performance and Satisfaction"

Indicators	Gender	N	Mean	Std. D.	t-value	p
Academic Competence	Female	121	4.28	.77	101.84	.000**
	Male	72	3.64	1.28		

Reflective Competence	Female	121	4.09	.61	130.93	.003**
	Male	72	3.79	.72		
Cooperation	Female	121	4.23	.46	96.84	.000**
	Male	72	3.64	.84		
Learning Environment	Female	121	4.16	.47	100.97	.000**
	Male	72	3.62	.80		
Violent Behavior	Female	121	3.64	.41	103.02	.000**
	Male	72	3.18	.67		
Content Clarity	Female	121	4.16	.50	114.62	.000**
	Male	72	3.77	.70		
Student Satisfaction	Female	121	3.06	.28	109.62	.431
	Male	72	3.11	.41		
Achievement	Female	121	63.51	1.21	191	.018*
	Male	72	67.06	1.32		

Table 2 revealed a remarkable variance in all the indicators except for students' satisfaction between male and female students. It is obvious that there exists a noteworthy variance between the two groups. The mean achievement score of all the indicators was high for female students when compared with male students. It is evident that female students have performed well in every indicator than for male students. However, there is not an apparent distinction in the satisfaction level of male and female students. They have shown equal level satisfaction. Female students have shown better academic and reflective competence as well as content clarity during their studies. They are cooperative with their colleagues and friends and perceive positive learning environment. One important factor is regarding the violent behavior. Female students have shown violent behavior more aggressively as compared with male students. On the other hand, the academic performance of male students was better as compared to female students.

Ho2: There is not an apparent distinction in rural and urban students' performance and satisfaction indicators.

Table 3 Comparison between Rural and Urban about "Students' Performance and Satisfaction"

Indicators	Area	N	Mean	Std. D	t-value	p
Academic Competence	Urban	96	4.11	.78	.972	.333
	Rural	98	3.96	1.24		
Reflective Competence	Urban	96	3.85	.54	-2.54	.012*
	Rural	98	4.09	.77		
Cooperation	Urban	96	4.08	.59	1.46	.144
	Rural	98	3.93	.78		
Learning Environment	Urban	96	4.11	.65	3.31	.001**
	Rural	98	3.80	.66		
Violent Behavior	Urban	96	3.65	.42	4.75	.000**
	Rural	98	3.28	.64		
Content Clarity	Urban	96	4.08	.47	1.56	.120
	Rural	98	3.94	.73		
Student Satisfaction	Urban	96	3.01	.29	-2.631	.009**
	Rural	98	3.14	.36		
Achievement	Urban	96	65.31	1.25	-.393	.695
	Rural	98	64.38	1.29		

Table 3 revealed a notable difference in the indicators of reflective competence, learning environment, violent behavior, and student satisfaction between urban and rural students. However, it is apparent that there exists no significant difference between the two groups. Reflective competence is better in rural students while urban students perceived learning environment as better indicator. Urban students show more violent behaviour and rural students show more satisfaction towards their studies. On the indicators of academic competence, cooperation, content clarity and achievement score, neither group has shown any significant difference.

Ho3: There is not an apparent distinction in students' performance and satisfaction indicators with respect to teaching methods.

Table 4 Comparison of Teaching Methods with Students' Performance and Satisfaction Indicators

		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Academic Competence	Between Groups	18.400	3	6.133	6.063	.001**
	Within Groups	192.212	190	1.012		
	Total	210.612	193			
Reflective Competence	Between Groups	6.890	3	2.297	5.326	.002**
	Within Groups	81.937	190	.431		
	Total	88.827	193			
Cooperation	Between Groups	12.217	3	4.072	9.333	.000**
	Within Groups	82.900	190	.436		
	Total	95.117	193			
Learning Environment	Between Groups	19.020	3	6.340	17.625	.000**
	Within Groups	68.344	190	.360		
	Total	87.364	193			
Violent Behavior	Between Groups	11.099	3	3.700	13.175	.000**
	Within Groups	53.354	190	.281		
	Total	64.453	193			
Content Clarity	Between Groups	15.142	3	5.047	16.112	.000**
	Within Groups	59.522	190	.313		
	Total	74.664	193			
Student Satisfaction	Between Groups	1.602	3	.534	4.938	.003**
	Within Groups	20.547	190	.108		
	Total	22.149	193			
Achievement score	Between Groups	17.440	3	5.813	3.731	.012*
	Within Groups	296.005	190	1.558		
	Total	313.444	193			

ANOVA was used to explore the impact of teaching methods on students' performance and satisfaction indicators. Table 4 found that teaching methods had strong significant impact on all the performance and satisfaction indicators.

Ho4: There is not an apparent distinction in students' performance and satisfaction indicators with respect to teaching subjects.

Table 5 Comparison of Teaching Subjects with Students' Performance and Satisfaction Indicators

		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Academic Competence	Between Groups	13.790	4	3.447	3.310	.012*
	Within Groups	196.822	189	1.041		
	Total	210.612	193			
Reflective Competence	Between Groups	1.636	4	.409	.887	.473
	Within Groups	87.191	189	.461		
	Total	88.827	193			
Cooperation	Between Groups	5.888	4	1.472	3.118	.016*
	Within Groups	89.229	189	.472		
	Total	95.117	193			
Learning Environment	Between Groups	8.565	4	2.141	5.136	.001**
	Within Groups	78.799	189	.417		
	Total	87.364	193			
Violent Behavior	Between Groups	6.991	4	1.748	5.749	.000*
	Within Groups	57.462	189	.304		
	Total	64.453	193			
Content Clarity	Between Groups	3.454	4	.864	2.292	.061
	Within Groups	71.209	189	.377		
	Total	74.664	193			
Student Satisfaction	Between Groups	.819	4	.205	1.815	.128
	Within Groups	21.329	189	.113		
	Total	22.149	193			
Achievement score	Between Groups	17.562	4	4.390	2.804	.027*
	Within Groups	295.882	189	1.566		
	Total	313.444	193			

ANOVA was used to explore the impact of teaching subjects on students' performance and satisfaction indicators. Table 5 found that teaching subjects had strong significant impact on the performance and satisfaction indicators except for reflective competence, concept clarity, and students' satisfaction.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 showed the mean value and standard deviation of the indicators under study. The students have perceived better academic competence at B. Ed honors level. They have claimed about the clarity of content. The next highest indicator was cooperation among students at university level regarding the academic activities in the classroom. The fourth indicator is the reflective competence about the courses they have studied in the program. They also perceived the positive learning environment. However, they have confessed to practicing violent behavior

at university level. They also had shown low satisfaction about their career in future and job placement. They are pessimistic about their future.

Table 2 revealed a remarkable variance in all the indicators except for students' satisfaction between male and female students. It is obvious that there exists a noteworthy variance between the two groups. The mean achievement score of all the indicators was high for female students when compared with male students. It is evident that female students have performed well in every indicator than for male students. However, there is not an apparent distinction in the satisfaction level of male and female students. They have shown an equal level of satisfaction. Female students have shown better academic and reflective competence as well as content clarity during their studies. They are cooperative with their colleagues and friends and perceive positive learning environment. One important factor is regarding the violent behavior. Female students have shown violent behavior more aggressively as compared with male students. The current results supported the previous studies. The violent behavior of students comprises scholastic piracy, misconduct during exams, forgery of assignments, rebellious, impolite dress, coming late, harassment and cheating (Adeniyi & Taiwo, 2011; Bello, 2012; Ibok, 2012; Omede, 2011; Osogbo, 2012). Whitley, Nelson and Jones (1999) found academic deceit that males showed more cheating behavior than females. Same findings were revealed from the study of Newstead, Franklyn-Stoke and Armstead (1996). On the other hand, Jordan (2001) observed that female students were expressively more likely to involve in cheating behaviors than male students. These findings were also confirmed by many studies (Gesinde, Adejumo, & Odusanya, 2011; Walton, 2011), that investigated female scholars were more aggressive in academic dishonesty than male students.

On the other hand, the academic performance of male students was better as compared with female students. The results supported the studies of (Lafontaine & Monsieur, 2009) that male teachers achieved higher score than females. However, it contradicts the differences between males and females in institutional satisfaction which is associated with scholars' academic achievement (Olkaba, 2013). However, it is contrary to the study of Olkaba (2013) that female students have better institutional satisfaction and academic achievement.

Table 3 revealed a notable difference in all the indicators of reflective competence, learning environment, violent behavior, and student satisfaction between urban and rural students. However, there is no difference between the two groups. Reflective competence is better in rural students while urban students perceived learning environment as better indicator. Urban students show more violent behaviour and rural students show more satisfaction towards their studies. On the indicators of academic competence, cooperation, content clarity and achievement score, neither groups have not shown any significant difference.

ANOVA was used to explore the impact of teaching methods on prospective teachers' performance and satisfaction indicators. Table 4 found that teaching methods had a strong significant impact on the performance and satisfaction indicators. The prospective teachers perceived lecture method as best instructional method and the performance of female prospective teachers is better than males.

ANOVA was used to explore the impact of teaching subjects on prospective teachers' performance and satisfaction indicators. Table 5 found that teaching subjects had strong significant impact on the performance and satisfaction indicators except for reflective competence, concept clarity, and students' satisfaction. The prospective teachers perceived teaching of English as best subject, and the performance of female prospective teachers is better than males.

Policy Recommendations

Keeping in view the above mentioned significant academic improvement and prospective teachers' satisfaction towards the program. It is astonishing that under the guidance of The Chief Minister Punjab, to achieve the 100% enrollment targets of out of school children, 100% retention of enrolled students and ensuring quality education under "Parho Punjab, Barho Punjab", the teachers' recruitment is started. The objectives will be to reduce overcrowding and multi grade teaching through redressal of teachers' shortage, reduction in the span of control of AEOs, ensure high quality teaching, improving leadership and accountability. All these posts from BPS 9 to 16 are recruited under the Appointing Authorities at district level. The basic academic qualification for teacher educators is BSEd/MSEd/ADE/B. Ed (Honors-4 years). In addition, the basic professional qualification is B. Ed., M. Ed., MS. Ed., or MA Education. ADE has two years of education (Government of the Punjab School Education Department Policy, 2016). All those disciplines are involved and claimed to be eligible to join teaching as a profession.

Suggestions from Academia

In 2009 when the government introduced the four-year B. Ed. program, it is suggested the jobs for those degree holders (Dawn, 23 July 2016). It is suggested to implement the program with its real soul under the policy recommendations.

Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is being awarded degrees to 100,000 B. Ed. graduates every year. Majority of the AIOU students, particularly women, belonged to the far-flung areas who could not afford the four-year and two-year programs. So, the one-year program should not be abolished (Dawn, July 23rd, 2016).

A new recruitment and service policy for ADE and B.Ed.(Hons) teachers has been prepared according to which the provincial governments decided to increase initial pay for ADE to BPS-16 and B.Ed. (Hons.) to BPS-17. The provincial Department of Services and General Administration have to formulate new recruitment rules that will give priority to filling new teaching posts which is still under approval phase (Munshi, Bhatti, & Irum, 2012).

A lack of awareness gap exists concerning the ADE and B. Ed. (Hons) program. District level educational managers should be conveyed clear recruitment process. Therefore, awareness must be provided to EDOS, DOs and school heads about the new recruitment program and policy.

Why did B. Ed (Honors students) benefit from general education students? Specific seats must be created for FA and FSc students to fulfill the requirements of science and arts teachers at schools. The students of B. Ed Honors are unable to join other relevant disciplines but the students with other disciplines are free to join teaching cadres.

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